## CHAPTER 1: DEATH OF A PERV!

THE INTERNATIONAL COMIC CONVENT AT THE SEASIDE CITY
CONVENTION CENTER. THE MAIN HALL. THE TOONSLEYLAND STUDIOS
"THE LAST SUPER" DISPLAY. A SATURDAY. 9:02 A.M.

Jack Diearly staggered hands-first toward the warm, fleshlike, silicone contents of the triple-D portion of the six-foot Overlady statue in the royal blue super-suit with golden crown chest logo instead of exposed cleavage. It did expose long superheroine legs and a ride-up-to-show-some-superheroine-cheeks cut in the rear. It looked sadly up at the waiting-to-be-filled wrist restraints on the fifteen foot high, crucifix-shaped Superfix machine. It would have looked angry if it knew what was coming at it.

Jack's hands hit both targets and groped, even as his blobby belly undulated, since it had two bloodstains

spreading on it. And as is often the case with the dying, Jack had a flashback of his life, starting with the last seven minutes.

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CONVENTION CENTER. THE MAIN HALL. THE TOONSLEYLAND STUDIOS
"THE LAST SUPER" DISPLAY. A SATURDAY. 8:55 A.M.

Had vile villain Lex Luthor gazed upon Teri Silver's four-by-six foot heartrending rendering of The Intellectual trying and failing to hold the hand of the dying Overlady, he'd have bawled like a baby, apologized to Superman, and spent hundreds of billions to help humanity.

Jack Diearly was different. "As Rand Ann says, 'Self sacrifice sucks!'" He ripped the rendering from the artwork wall near the Superfix and hurled it to the floor. "A superheroine not drawn by me is both a sham AND a sham!" He ground his foot upon the Overlady's face.

A sepulcher, Swedish voice cut through the display area and iced into Jack's bloodstream: "Step avay from dat artverk..." The voice echoed off the mockups of the Hellfire Cannon, the Superfix, the Intellecta-Mobile, and an artwork wall: "artverk... artverk... artverk... artverk... artverk...

Jack defrosted fast, his abundant belly containing enough stored blubbery heat to keep Luke Skywalker from freezing on an ice planet. "Bite me, fanboy!" He aimed his

heel at The Intellectual's cowled, sad visage. Then a long metal tube telescoped and planted two electrodes on Jack's chest: BAH-ZAP!

"Guh guh!" gasped Jack, eyes bugging out, legs trembling but not collapsing.

The white hooded robe of the Super Spook silently, scarily slid toward Jack. "You stepped. And not in a nice vay." The metal tube collapsed like a pirate telescope into a scythe the size of a shotgun. A long, thin, pale hand kept the scythe gun bulls-eyed it on Jack's chest. "Dat vas 'triple gasp but stay standing' setting. Next setting vill be 'ouchie.' Now tell me vere da final super secret collectible is."

The eerie glow from the Superfix illuminated the hood's contents: a lean, pale face where tans dared not venture. A blonde, ultrafine crewcut revealed a vaguely cubical skull. Ice-blue eyes did not blink. Thin bloodless lips mournfully drooped.

Why do fanboy think hoods make good masks? Jack said,
"I have no idea what--" The gun's metal tube telescoped
onto Jack's belly button, whose dent was plainly visible on
his unmercifully stretched XXXXL T-shirt. ZZZAAAPPP!!!

"OUCHIE!" He stumbled back into the fifteen-foot tall Superfix and sat down hard with a meaty thud.

The tall pale man stood statue still. "Ouchie is not

good. I know you are lying. You have a super someting dat you do not deserve."

He knows! He really knows! Jack scrambled to his feet and crossed his arms defiantly over his limited edition 3D Powerful Girl T-shirt, clinking his gold-plated Wonderous Woman bracelets, and jostling his Atlas Man, hey-kids-it-looks-real, semi-automatic holstered on his hip. "Do I look like I'd carry rare collectibles on my talented self?"

The tall pale man cocked his head. "Yah, sure, you betcha." His eyes gleamed down from over six feet of height. "And vunce I deliver dem to da righteous vuns, da fanboys vill rise to da heavens! And so vill da fangirls. Equal opportunity, you know."

Jack snorted. "The right place for fangirls is the kitchen! And in tight skimpy spandex."

"Yah, vee know vhat you tink of ladies." He jabbed the Spooky Scythe Gun at Jack and thumbed a button. "You vould not like pants vetting setting."

Jack took a calming breath. Then he recited the deep, dark secret he'd held in reserve for years, for his most desperate moments. "My hideout has a hidden hot tub filled with warm strawberry jam, where the Overlady will join me once she becomes real, and I will lick--"

"Not dat secret!" The tall pale man's mouth pursed as though he had a mouthful of super-sour pickled herring.

"Every true fanboy knows dat! And vould like to forget it."

Jack's grey beard twitched with fear and anger. "How? How can you pathetic fanboys possibly know?"

"You might tink about posting less rants on your blog. Fangirls tire of your long lists of superheroine's cup sizes." The tall pale man put the cutting cold of a Swedish winter wind into his voice. "Now know dis. I have collected all da other super collectibles."

"No!" gasped Jack.

"Yah," said the tall pale man. Your comrades possess only fakes."

"It can't be!" choked Jack, his eyes bulging.

"Yah again. Only you are left. As you are da biggest, most determined collector of all, and as you still have such artistic talent, I offer you vun last chance to join us." He aimed his gun. "Da secret, please."

Jack smiled toothily. "As Rand Ann says, 'Sharing sucks.' You should know this. I called you here." His voice imitated Teri Silver's. "'Help me, you're my artwork's only hope!'" His teeth gleamed. "And I know where your super secret stash is. And I know that my gun is NOT a replica!" He drew it and swung it at the tall pale man.

And he went cross-eyed. The two electric prongs of the scythe gun were poking into his nostrils. FRAH-SNAZZLE!

"Sniff, snort, by dose, by dose!" His gun hand lost

its aim.

"Care to drop da gun?" The tall pale man's scythe gun pulled back its prongs. Then shot them out again into Jack's mouth.

Which eloquently expressed displeasure. "Mmf blug fmmb shnuffle glompfff..."

BZZZZT! Jack's tongue did the jitterbug. "MMFFFFF!"
"Sorry, let me..." The prongs hit Jack's right nipple.
FRAZZZZ! "OOTCH!"

Then his left nipple. SNAZZZ! "URGH!"
Then his belly button. FFZZZT! "EEP!"

Then his pants zipper.

Jack stood very very very still. His fearful eyes locked on the tall pale man's eyes. "Please... don't... I wanna have babies..." He held out his gun, his hand trembling, his fingers loosening.

The tall pale man fumbled with his gun. "Sorry, I should have read da user manual. Dis button should do it."

BAH-MONDO-FFFRRAAA-ZZZAAAAAAPPPPPPPP!!!! Jack's belly undulated, his eyes rolled, his mouth babbled. "Ooo... ugh... limbs twitching... strength fleeing... bladder emptying..." He fell. And dropped his gun. Which fired.

The tall pale man stepped up to Jack. "You all right?"

Jack pointed at two spreading stains on his chest.

"Does this look like stun setting? Philistine! Hah, but you

still do not have the final secret collectible!" He furtively glanced at his portfolio.

The tall pale man followed the glance. "Sez you." He reached into the portfolio and pulled out number 667 of The Last Super bloody edition graphic novel. He stared at it. "Vell. Dis is anti-climactic. I didn't even have to do any puzzles." He turned to Jack. "Should I call a doctor?"

Jack pulled out his phone. "I'll do that myself, thank you very much!" He dialed with one hand, flamboyantly put the other hand on his chest. "Oh, the pain, the pain!"

"Sorry about dat." The tall pale man put the graphic novel into a large pocket in his robe. He thought a moment. And another. And another.

Jack stopped mid-dial. He glared at the tall pale man. "So? What's with the, choke, gag, hold up?"

The tall pale man tapped his cheek with a finger. "I need to say a better scary parting line. How about, 'My verk here is done'?"

"Worst parting line ever!"

"Um, vith great power... no, da vages of greed are...
um, yustice is served hot, or cold, or is it room
temperature?"

"WILL YOU GET OUT OF HERE?!?!?"

The tall pale man spookily slid away. "Sheesh, vat an grouch."

Hmph, I thought he'd never leave. Like a blubbery bowling ball, Jack rolled to Teri Silver's artwork. He dipped his finger on his chest, then onto the artwork, and began writing. He wrote and wrote, a mysterious message meant for the man who would put the mysterious plan into motion, the one who would unlock the final barrier, bringing such power, such glory, such--

Jack was dialing his phone. "Actually, I finished that message. Now I'm making the desperate phone calls."

Oh. Okay. And he phoned the fanboy messiah, and the angry avenger, and anyone else who needed mysterious phone calls to set plans into motion, and--

"Ah, I'm done!"

Already?

"Yes. And now that the flashback is done..."

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Jack Diearly staggered hands-first toward the warm, fleshlike, silicone contents of the triple-D portion of the six-foot Super Grail statue, etc. etc., his hands hit both targets and groped...

"Oh yeah, oh mama, so triple-D round, so fantastically firm, so super fully packed..."

But Jack's strength strength shrank as the stains on

his chest grew...

"Wait, I want to grope a little more!"

And he staggered...

"But I still maintain my grip!"

And he fell to his knees...

"Yet, I still grope!" His hands still kneaded.

"Persistent, aren't I?"

And as his hands slid off the Overlady statue...

"Hey, I wasn't finished!"

And the very last of his life leaked away...

"Choke. No fair! Gasp."

He spat one last insult at the fates...

"Wheeze..." THUD.

Um, Jack? Where's your insult? Hello?

The author poked Jack's elephant seal body. Poke, poke, poke.

Nuts. Now I know what a cat feels like when the mouse it's been playing with stops moving.